



Australian Bureau of Statistics

4705.0 - Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001

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2001 Census: Further analysis of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population distribution

Using figures from the 2001 Census released last week the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today released estimates of Australia's resident Indigenous population. As at 30 June 2001 the estimated resident Indigenous population of Australia was 460,140, or 2.4% of the total population.

New South Wales was estimated to have the largest resident Indigenous population (135,319 Indigenous people or 29% of the total Indigenous population), followed by Queensland (126,035 or 27%), Western Australia (66,069 or 14%) and the Northern Territory (57,550 or 13%). In the Northern Territory it is estimated that more than one in four people (29%) are of Indigenous origin.

According to the latest Census results, the Census count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia increased by 16% between the 1996 and 2001 Censuses. The Census count for the total population increased by 6% over the same period. Natural increase (births minus deaths) accounted for a 12% increase in the Indigenous population, with a further 4% increase due to other factors, such as an increasing propensity for people to be identified as Indigenous on Census forms.

Eleven percent of Australians who were identified as Indigenous in the 2001 Census were Torres Strait Islander in origin. Queensland was home to more than half (58%) of all Torres Strait Islanders, with the remainder of the Torres Strait Islander population spread across the other States and Territories with 18% in New South Wales and 6% in Victoria.

The 2001 Census found the largest Indigenous populations tend to be in urban areas, with the Sydney ATSI Region recording the highest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (37,557 Indigenous residents). This Region, together with Brisbane (34,809), Coffs Harbour (32,122), Wagga Wagga (20,966) and Perth (20,506) ATSI Regions, accounted for 36% of the identified Indigenous population in 2001.

Other ATSI Regions recorded much smaller Indigenous populations, but in some of these Regions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were in the majority, such as the Torres Strait Area in Queensland (77%) and the Jabiru and Apatula Regions of Northern Territory (both 75%).

The ABS divides each ATSI Region into Indigenous Areas to provide a basis for analysing data in smaller areas. The Indigenous Area with the most Indigenous Australians, based on Census usual residence counts, was the City of Townsville with 4,369 or 5% of that Area's total

population.

Further details are available in **Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001** (cat. no. 4705.0). A specialised set of Indigenous profiles are also available on this site.

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